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Bonding Across Cultures

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Bonding Across Cultures

Seventh annual Global Fest celebrates cultural diversity across campus



April 4, 2013 | Jill Rodrigues '05

BRISTOL, R.I. -- From Bolivia to Syria to Azerbaijan, a record number of RWU's international students from more than 50 countries shared their cultural traditions with the University and the local community at Wednesday's annual Global Fest celebration.

The seventh annual Global Fest celebrated cultural diversity and provided the students at Roger Williams and the community-at-large with the opportunity to learn more about the diversity that exists in their own backyard through traditional dances, ethnic delicacies, artistry and interactive lessons of everyday life in other countries.

Each year the Intercultural Center strives to increase the depth and scope of the event. This year's Global Fest drew the most participation yet from Roger Williams students. More than 250 international students – more than double last year's participants – shared their cultures at 50 interactive booths, and student performances ranging from hula hooping to a traditional Israeli dance dominated an entire hour of the event. The event also featured a performance by Caribbean steel drum band Jason Roseman & Tropical Gems and a martial arts demonstration from Sinha Capoeira.

"It's an educational experience, learning about all these different cultures, but also hopefully a lot of fun," said Maria Adkins, assistant director of the Intercultural Center. "You get a passport when you enter and you get stamps from the different countries you visit – a little taste of Korea, Morocco, Lebanon. You get to appreciate different ethnic dances, taste different food, come away happy and excited and having learned that there's so much diversity here at Roger Williams to celebrate."

In addition to students, staff and faculty, about 100 fifth-grade students from Hugh Cole Elementary School in Warren came to learn more about the diverse cultures within the RWU community.

"We invite them as a way to get the community involved. I hope that they come away from it learning about different cultures, talking with people from different countries, being able to see people in clothes they don't see very often. I hope it's an interactive experience and just a positive way to learn about different cultures," Adkins said.

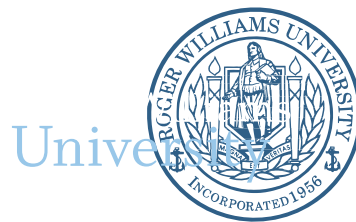
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